

Message Text

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ORIGIN SSM-05

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 1 OMITTED)

1. WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR VIEWS ON HOW WE MIGHT RESOLVE
PROBLEM IN MESSAGE BELOW.

FOL REPEAT STATE 052832 ACTION CAIRO LONDON INFO SINAI
TEL AVIV 4 MAR.

QUOTE

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FOR THE AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, EG, IS, US

SUBJECT: OCEAN TRANSPORTATION OF MATERIALS FOR SFM PERMA-
NENT CAMP

REF: A. CAIRO 1999

1. WE HAVE AN EMERGING PROBLEM ASSOCIATED WITH THE CON-
STRUCTION OF THE SFM PERMANENT BASE CAMP AND WATCH STATIONS
THAT COULD BE QUITE TROUBLESOME IN TERMS OF SCHEDULE, COST
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AND POSSIBLE DAMAGE TO ESSENTIAL CONSTRUCTION COMPONENTS.

PURPOSE OF THIS MESSAGE IS TO EXPLAIN THE PROBLEM AND
SEEK YOUR ADVICE AND COUNSEL.

2. CENTRAL TO THE CONCEPT OF THE PERMANENT CONSTRUCTION
OF THE SFM FACILITIES IS THE USE OF PRE-STRESSED CON-
CRETE MODULES. PLAN CALLS FOR THE USE OF 124 OF THESE
MODULES, EACH OF WHICH WEIGHS ABOUT 32 TONS AND IS
ABOUT ONE-HALF THE SIZE OF A RAILWAY CAR. THE MODULES
WILL BE SHIPPED BY SEA ALONG WITH SPECIAL CRANES AND
EQUIPMENT FOR THEIR TRANSPORT TO THE SINAI.

3. THE COMPANY DOING THE CONSTRUCTION WORK IS THE H. B.
ZACHRY CO. UNDER SUB-CONTRACT TO THE PRIME CONTRACTOR,

WHICH IS E-SYSTEMS, INC. ZACHRY HAS A BRITISH REGISTRY
VESSEL UNDER CHARTER FOR THE SEALIFT OF THE MODULES
AND ASSOCIATED MATERIAL AND EQUIPMENT. THE NAME OF
THE VESSEL M/V GARTHNEWYDD OWNED BY GARTH SHIPPING
CO., LTD.

4. THE ORIGINAL PLAN TENTATIVE AND DRAWN UP WITHOUT
THE BENEFIT OF EXPERIENCE IN THE SINAI, CALLED FOR THE
SHIPMENT TO OFFLOAD AT PORT SAID. EXPERIENCE IN THE
AREA, CONSULTATIONS WITH EGYPTIAN AUTHORITIES AND AN
ON-SITE INSPECTION BY AN EXPERT FROM ZACHRY HAVE SINCE
MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT SHIPMENT THROUGH PORT SAID
AND SURFACE TRANSPORT ACROSS THE CANAL AND TO THE
SINAI ON EXISTING ROAD BEDS WILL BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT
AND RUN A HIGH RISK OF DAMAGE TO THE MODULES. SOME
ROAD CONSTRUCTION MIGHT EVEN BE REQUIRED AND DELAYS

TO SCHEDULE AND SUBSTANTIAL INCREASED COSTS ARE CERTAIN.

5. WITH THESE CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND WE OPTED FOR
SHIPMENT THROUGH ASHDOD. OVER THE PAST TEN DAYS THE
OWNERS OF THE SHIP HAVE RAISED THE POSSIBILITY THAT
THEIR SHIP WILL BE PLACED ON THE BOYCOTT LIST OF THE
LEAGUE OF ARAB COUNTRIES.

6. AS A RESULT OF THIS CONCERN THE OWNERS, GARTH
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SHIPPING CO., LTD, HAVE HELD A MEETING WITH LONDON
REPRESENTATIVE OF ARAB LEAGUE TO DISCUSS QUESTION OF
A WAIVER TO BOYCOTT RESTRICTIONS. ADVICE OF AL
REPRESENTATIVE WAS THAT GARTH SHOULD CONVEY QUESTION TO
EGYPTIAN BOYCOTT OFFICE AND CENTRAL BOYCOTT OFFICE IN
DAMASCUS. GARTH ACTED WITHOUT CONSULTATION WITH SSM
OR STATE AND WE HAD NO INPUT INTO GARTH CABLES AND
INDEED ONLY OBTAINED THE TEXTS 2 MARCH. WE CAN NOT

EXPLAIN REFERENCE TO UN NOR TO OUR REFUSING TO PERMIT LOADING TO BEGIN WHICH DID NOT OCCUR. WE HAVE NOW REQUESTED GARTH TO HOLD ANY FURTHER CONTACTS UNTIL WE HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CONSULT. CABLE EXCHANGES WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. GARTH SENT THE FOLLOWING QUOTED CABLE TO MR. MOHAMMED MAHGOUB, COMMISSIONER GENERAL, CENTRAL OFFICE FOR BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL IN DAMASCUS ON FEBRUARY 24. BEGIN QUOTE WE HAD A MEETING TODAY WITH MR. BAGDADI AT HIS LONDON OFFICE AND HE ADVISED US TO CABLE YOU WITH THE FOLLOWING PROBLEM. WE ARE THE OWNERS OF THE M/V GARTHNEWYDD, DUE TO COMMENCE LOADING TOMORROW,

25TH FEBRUARY, AT CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS, A CARGO OF HOUSES AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT FOR THE UN PEACEKEEPING FORCE LOCATED IN THE SINAI DESERT. THE ORIGINAL CHARTER STATES THAT THE DISCHARGE PORT FOR THIS CARGO SHALL BE PORT SAID, BUT WE HAVE BEEN INFORMED BY THE UN THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO DELIVER THE CARGO TO ITS DESERT LOCATION AS THE SWINGING CANAL BRIDGE AT ISMAILIA IS TOO NARROW TO ALLOW THE TRANSIT OF LORRIES WITH THE HOUSES. THE UN HAVE REQUESTED THAT THE VESSEL NOW DISCHARGES AT ASHDOD BUT WE HAVE PRESENTLY REFUSED THIS REQUEST AS WE DO NOT WISH TO BE BLACKLISTED BY THE ARAB STATES FOR TRADING WITH ISRAEL. WE RESPECTFULLY ASK YOU IF YOU WOULD GIVE US FIRM GUARANTEES AND ASSURANCES THAT IF WE AGREE WITH THE REQUEST OF THE UN, THE GARTHNEWYDD OR ANY OTHER VESSELS OF OUR FLEET WOULD NOT BE BLACKLISTED AT ANY FUTURE DATE FROM TRADING WITH ANY ARAB NATION. BOTH THE UN AND THE AMERICAN STATE DEPARTMENT WILL BE CONTACTING YOU TO DISCUSS THIS PROBLEM, AND WE AWAIT TO HEAR FROM YOU THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NECESSARY GUARANTEES WE REQUIRE WILL BE SUPPLIED. SIGNED PETER TUDBALL, DIRECTOR, GARTH SHIPPING CO., LTD. END QUOTE.

B. GARTH SENT THE FOLLOWING QUOTED FOLLOW UP CABLE TO THE DAMASCUS OFFICE ON FEBRUARY 25. BEGIN QUOTE REFERENCE OUR CABLE OF TWENTY-FOURTH PLEASE URGENTLY AS OUR VESSEL GARTHNEWYDD HAS NOW ARRIVED CORPUS CHRISTI AND THE UN AND U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT ARE REFUSING TO PERMIT HER TO COMMENCE LOADING UNLESS YOU GIVE US SUITABLE GUARANTEES WHICH WILL ALLOW US TO DISCHARGE ASHDOD WITHOUT BEING BLACKLISTED. END QUOTE.

C. GARTH SENT THE FOLLOWING QUOTED CABLE TO THE

COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF THE EGYPTIAN BOYCOTT OFFICE IN ALEXANDRIA ON FEBRUARY 26. NO ANSWER TO THIS CABLE HAS BEEN RECEIVED BY GARTH. BEGIN QUOTE M/V GARTHNEWYDD. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MR. MAHGOUB OF DAMASCUS HAS CONTACTED YOU REGARDING THE ABOVE VESSEL DISCHARGING AT ASHDOD, A UNITED NATIONS CARGO OF HOUSES. PLEASE CONFIRM URGENTLY THAT VESSEL WILL NOT BE BLACKLISTED BY YOU OR ANY OTHER ARAB STATE DUE TO THIS CALL AT ASHDOD. UNDERSTAND AMERICAN STATE DEPARTMENT AND UNITED NATIONS BOTH CONTACTING YOU TO OBTAIN YOUR GUARANTEES. URGENTLY AWAIT YOUR NEWS. END QUOTE.

D. GARTH RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING QUOTED CABLE FROM THE DAMASCUS BOYCOTT OFFICE ON MARCH 1. BEGIN QUOTE. GIVING GUARANTEES IS BEYOND OUR JURISDICTION. SIGNED COMMISSIONER GENERAL. END QUOTE.

E. GARTH HAS SENT THE FOLLOWING QUOTED CABLE TO ZACHRY'S SHIPPING AGENT. BEGIN QUOTE WE WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFLUENCE YOU CAN BRING TO BEAR TO INSURE THIS VESSEL NOT BEING BLACKLISTED BY ARAB STATES IN FUTURE IF THE VESSEL DISCHARGES THIS CARGO IN ISRAEL OTHERWISE WE REGRETABLY ARE COMPELLED TO DISCHARGE THE CARGO IN PORT SAID AS PER TERMS OF CHARTER PARTY. END QUOTE.
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7. AS NOTED ABOVE THE GARTHNEWYDD IS CURRENTLY BEING LOADED IN CORPUS CHRISTI, TEXAS. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THE VESSEL WILL SAIL ON MARCH 5 WITH A SCHEDULED ARRIVAL DATE OF APPROXIMATELY MARCH 25. SHIP WILL SAIL WITH PORT SAID AS PORT OF DESTINATION BUT CAN BE DIVERTED TO ASHDOD IF WE CAN ASSURE GARTH BY MARCH 12 THAT THERE WILL BE NO BOYCOTT. THEREFORE IF USG IS TO ASSIST IN OBTAINING WAIVER, ACTION MUST BE INITIATED SOONEST.

8. IT IS NOTED FOR YOUR INFORMATION THAT PARAGRAPH 16.A.1., PAGE 56 OF THE "GENERAL PRINCIPLES FOR BOYCOTT OF ISRAEL" ATTACHED TO MARCH 1, 1973, AIRGRAM FROM AMEMBASSY BEAIRUT TO SECSTATE, INFO CAIRO, SEEMS TO REQUIRE THE ADDITION OF SHIPS TO THE BOYCOTT LIST ONLY IF THEY HAVE CALLED ON BOTH ARAB AND ISRAELI PORTS ON A SINGLE VOYAGE WHICH WILL NOT BE THE CASE ON THE VOYAGE IN QUESTION. WE HAVE BEEN TOLD BY GARTH THAT GARTHNEWYDD IS MOST LIKELY TO RETURN EMPTY TO CORPUS CHRISTI AFTER UNLOADING OUR CARGO TO PICK UP CARGO BOUND FOR SAUDI ARABIA WHICH WOULD BE A SEPARATE

VOYAGE.

9. FOR CAIRO: REQUEST YOU INFORM SSM OF ADVISABILITY
OF USG INTERVENTION IN THIS MATTER BEFORE ANY ACION
IS INITIATED BY STATE, SSM, OR AMEM0ASSY CAIRO.

10. FOR LONDON: PLEASE GIVE US YOUR VIEWS ON THE
POSSIBILITY OF OBTAINING HMG ASSISTANCE IN SECURING
WAIVER FROM ARAB LEAGUE. WE ARE INFORMED THAT GARTH

HAS CONTACTED GENERAL COUNCIL OF BRITISH SHIPPING WHO
REFERRED THEM TO ARAB LEAGUE REPRESENTATIVE IN LONDON.
GARTH HAS NOT CONTACTED FOREIGN OFFICE ON THIS MATTER.
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